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Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family

Report of the Third Committee

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I. Introduction

1. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 15 September 1998, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its fifty-third session the item entitled "Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family" and to allocate it to the Third Committee.

2. The Third Committee considered the item at its 3rd to 6th, 11th and 15th meetings, from 5 to 8 and on 13 and 16 October 1998. An account of the Committee's discussion is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.3/53/SR.3-6, 11 and 15).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Relevant chapters of the report of the Economic and Social Council for 1998 (A/53/3);[1]

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on preparations for the International Year of Older Persons (A/53/294);

(c) Letter dated 2 February 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the report of the Tokyo International Conference on Preventive Strategy, held at Tokyo from 13 to 15 January 1998 (A/53/63-S/1998/100);

[1] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 3.*

(d) Letter dated 23 February 1998 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the final documents of the Eighth Session of the Islamic Summit Conference, held at Tehran from 9 to 11 December 1997 (A/53/72-S/1998/156);

(e) Letter dated 8 April 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the final communiqué of the twenty-fifth session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, held at Doha from 15 to 17 March 1998 (A/53/95-S/1998/311);

(f) Letter dated 14 April 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the proceedings of the presentation to Canada of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt International Disability Award, held at United Nations Headquarters on 2 March 1998 (A/53/97);

(g) Letter dated 20 August 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the text of the report of the International Expert Meeting on Innovative Employment Initiatives, held at the United Nations Office at Vienna from 2 to 6 February 1998 (A/53/350);

(h) Letter dated 4 September 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the Final Declaration of the Twenty-third Meeting of Ministers of Health of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Havana on 25 and 26 June 1998 (A/53/356);

(i) Letter dated 11 September 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the texts of the Lisbon Declaration on Youth, Policies and Programmes, adopted at the first World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth, held at Lisbon from 8 to 12 August 1998, and the Braga Youth Action Plan, adopted by the Third World Youth Forum of the United Nations System, held at Braga, Portugal, from 2 to 7 August 1998 (A/53/378);

(j) Letter dated 16 September 1998 from the Permanent Representative of the Federated States of Micronesia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the communiqué of the twenty-ninth South Pacific Forum, held at Palikir, Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, on 24 and 25 August 1998 (A/53/416);

(k) Letter dated 17 September 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a study on the repercussions of the unjust economic embargo imposed on the Iraqi people in the economic, health, environmental, agricultural and cultural sectors (A/53/425);

(l) Letter dated 9 October 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Panama to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the Panama City Declaration and the Declaration of Heads of State and Government adopted at the Twelfth Summit of the Rio Group, held in Panama on 4 and 5 September 1998 (A/53/489).

4. At the 3rd meeting, on 5 October, the Director of the Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, made an introductory statement (see A/C.3/53/SR.3).

II. Consideration of draft resolution A/C.3/53/L.6

5. At the 11th meeting, on 13 October, the representative of the Dominican Republic, on behalf of *Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium,*

Bolivia, Canada, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Denmark, the *Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Luxembourg, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco,* the *Netherlands, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay,* the *Philippines, Portugal,* the *Republic of Korea,* the *Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine,* the *United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Venezuela* and *Zambia*, introduced a draft resolution entitled "International Year of Older Persons, 1999" (A/C.3/53/L.6). Subsequently, *Cameroon,* the *Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Guinea, India, Israel, Malta,* the *Federated States of Micronesia, Nepal, New Zealand,* the *Russian Federation, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Singapore,* the *Sudan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* and the *United States of America* joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

6. At its 15th meeting, on 16 October, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.3/53/L.6, without a vote (see para. 7).

III. Recommendation of the Third Committee

7. The Third Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

International Year of Older Persons, 1999

The General Assembly,

Recalling its Proclamation on Ageing,[2] in which, *inter alia*, it designated the year 1999 as the International Year of Older Persons,

Recalling also the conceptual and operational frameworks for the International Year,[3]

Convinced of the need to implement the International Plan of Action on Ageing[4] and to promote adherence to the United Nations Principles for Older Persons,[5]

Mindful of its resolution 40/30 of 29 November 1985, in which it expressed its conviction that older persons must be considered an important and necessary element in the development process at all levels within a given society,

Mindful also of the relevant provisions of the Copenhagen Declaration and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development,[6] the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,[7] the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights,[8] the Beijing

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[2] General Assembly resolution 47/5, annex.

[3] A/50/114 and A/52/328.

[4] See *Report of the World Assembly on Ageing, Vienna, 26 July–6 August 1982* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.82.I.16), chap. VI.

[5] General Assembly resolution 46/91.

[6] *Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6–12 March 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[7] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5–13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[8] *Report of the World Conference on Human Rights* (A/CONF.157/24 (Part I)), chap. III.

Declaration and Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women,[9] and the Habitat Agenda adopted by the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II),[10]

Aware that, on the eve of the twenty-first century, the ageing of individuals and populations, unprecedented in the history of humankind, is having far-reaching effects on the way societies organize themselves, on relationships between the generations in families and communities, on the entire course of individual lives, and on the terms, images and roles of older persons in their societies,

Mindful of the necessity to include a gender dimension in the preparations for the International Year of Older Persons,

Wishing to promote investments in human development over the entire lifespan and in preserving and supporting age-integrated social institutions,

Convinced that moving towards a society for all ages will require policies that strengthen individual lifelong development into late life, focused on self-help and independence, and, relatedly and simultaneously, strengthen enabling environments of families, neighbourhoods, communities of interest and broad societal institutions based on principles of reciprocity and interdependence,

1. *Notes with satisfaction* the successful launching of the International Year of Older Persons, with the theme "A society for all ages", on 1 October 1998 around the world and at United Nations Headquarters by the Secretary-General;

2. *Notes with appreciation* the valuable report of the Secretary-General entitled "Preparations for the International Year of Older Persons",[11] including its exploration of a society for all ages, presented for further debate by national committees and others;

3. *Encourages* all States, the United Nations system and all other actors, in reaching out for a future society for all ages, to take advantage of the International Year of Older Persons so as to increase awareness of the challenge of the demographic ageing of societies, the individual and social needs of older persons, the contributions of older persons to society and the need for a change in attitudes towards older persons;

4. *Welcomes* the activities relating to older persons undertaken by States, United Nations organizations and bodies and non-governmental organizations devoted to raising awareness, networking, reaching out and looking ahead beyond 1999;

5. *Encourages* States that have not yet done so to establish a national focal point or broad-based committee for the Year, and re-emphasizes that activities for the Year should be initiated primarily at the national level;

6. *Welcomes* the redesignation of the intergovernmental Support Group as the Consultative Group, and invites it to continue its contributions to the observance of the Year;

7. *Recommends* that the Commission for Social Development should mainstream the issue of older persons into the work of the Commission and the preparatory work for the special session of the General Assembly to review the World Summit for Social Development in the year 2000;

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[9] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[10] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), Istanbul, 3–14 June 1996* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.97.IV.6), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[11] A/53/294.

8. *Calls upon* States, United Nations agencies and bodies and institutions of civil society, including the research community, to avoid age and gender bias in their treatment of older women so as to ensure that all older women have equal access to the private sector and to social services and to ensure their full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms;

9. *Encourages* States to embody in appropriate legislation the rights of older persons to equal access to and the use of social services, including care-giving systems and support services, without any discrimination;

10. *Urges* that the issue of older persons be mainstreamed into the work of the United Nations and national socio-economic programmes and plans, as appropriate;

11. *Invites* national committees to consider the desirability of drawing up:

(a) A set of principles for a society for all ages;

(b) Practical strategies for a society for all ages, aimed at mainstreaming ageing into programmes and policies, while ensuring that the immediate developmental, income-security and health-care needs of older persons are met;

12. *Invites* national and international development entities, foundations and enterprises to explore ways of improving the access of older persons to credit, training and appropriate technologies for income generation and their participation in family, community and small businesses;

13. *Also invites* Member States, in the five-year review and appraisal of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, to examine the implications of individual and population ageing;

14. *Also invites* the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat to continue its information campaign, intensifying, as feasible, its activities in January 1999 in support of countries that were unable to launch observances on 1 October 1998;

15. *Recommends* that research agendas for the next decades address the socio-economic adjustments required to move towards a society for all ages, focusing, essentially, on the lifelong and society-wide, immediate and long-term implications of individual and population ageing within varied national contexts, and requests the United Nations programme on ageing to give priority attention to the research needs of developing countries;

16. *Invites* the United Nations Volunteers and organizations of older persons to evaluate the contributions of senior volunteers in creating societies for all ages, in keeping with the traditions, resources and aspirations of each country;

17. *Notes with appreciation* the valuable role of the media in the preparations for the Year and in raising awareness of it, and encourages the media, consistent with freedom of expression, to present non-stereotyped images of older persons;

18. *Invites* those institutions of civil society that are playing a vital role at the local, national and international levels in promoting the Year to focus their observance of the International Day of Older Persons (1 October) in 1999 on the theme "Late-life potentials and contributions in a new age";

19. *Requests* States to participate, at an appropriate global policy-making level, in the four plenary meetings which, in resolution 52/80 of 12 December 1997, it decided to devote at its fifty-fourth session to the Year and its follow-up;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution.